

Niger at the crossroads

What happens after reaching Niger? Understanding onward movements, immobility, and risks

PACES

Making migration and migration policy decisions amidst societal transformations

This infographic is part of a two-publication series examining primary and secondary movements to, within and onward from Niger. The research draws on a longitudinal design,¹ administering surveys to the same individuals at different points in time. It included two rounds of follow-up interviews conducted six and twelve months after an initial baseline. Therefore, the data presented in this infographic offer insights into how migration decisions evolve over time alongside changing aspirations and exposure to danger.

METHODOLOGY

BASELINE SURVEYS

SAMPLE SIZE: 512

SAMPLING CRITERIA AND TARGETS: ≥40% Nigerians, minimum stay of 3 months in Niger since arrival

DATA COLLECTION PERIOD:

April-May 2024

DATA COLLECTION SITES:

Niamey (n=125), Zinder (n=128), Agadez (n=136), Diffa (n=123)

LONGITUDINAL SURVEYS

Round 1

SAMPLE SIZE: 60

DATA COLLECTION PERIOD:

November 2024

METHOD: Telephone interviews

Round 2

SAMPLE SIZE: 30 (out of the participants in round 1)

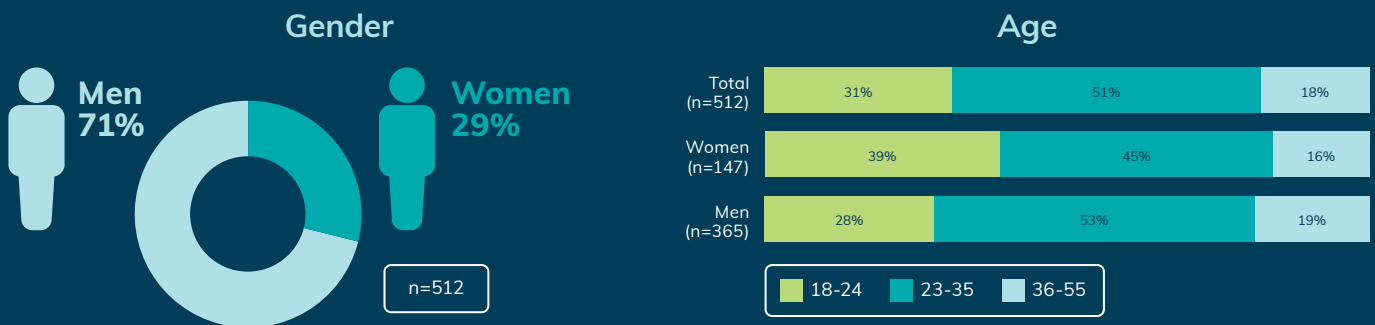
DATA COLLECTION PERIOD: May 2025

METHOD: Telephone interviews

Key findings

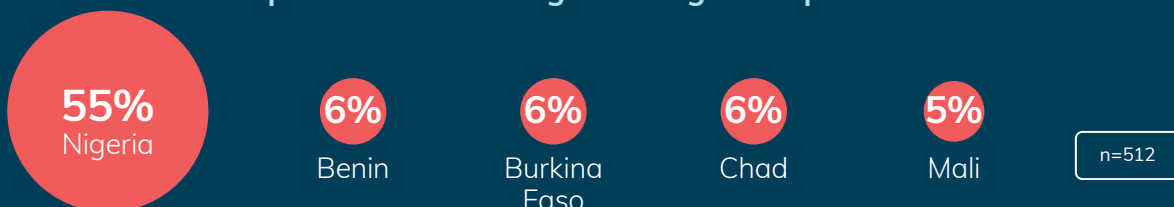
- Most respondents (87%) were initially planning to continue their journey beyond Niger.
- Among respondents planning to move onward (n=443), half (50%) reported lacking sufficient information on migration rules and regulations in their destination, a gap that could push them into unsafe and irregular journeys.
- Secondary movements² follow northbound routes: six months later (n=60), 20 respondents had reached North Africa, mainly Algeria (8) and Libya (11), and 10 were in Europe.
- Two-thirds (20/30) of respondents were still planning to keep moving after 12 months. Economic aspirations continue to shape intentions over months, as underlying needs remained unresolved.
- Intentions change over time: after a year, 12/30 respondents aimed for a different destination as initially planned, while 10/30 decided to end their journey, including 5 who remained in Niger.
- Respondents reported feeling safer over time (41/60 after 6 months and 25/30 after 12 months), regardless of whether they had moved onward or remained in Niger.
- Many reported abuses, particularly among those who moved onward from Niger in the first 6-month period (22/30).
- Experiencing abuses has a broader impact on migration journeys. Among respondents who reported experiencing abuses in the first 6-month period (n=34), 18 adopted greater protective measures, 14 changed routes and 13 changed destinations after these incidents.

Respondents' profiles



Respondents came from 19 different countries, with **Nigerians accounting for over half of the sample** due to their purposive selection in the sampling strategy.

Top 5 countries of origin among all respondents



¹ For more information about MMC's longitudinal methodology, visit: Georgia Cale, Flannery Dyon, Susan Gichuhi, Jane Linekar (2022), Longitudinal research with people on the move, MMC.

² Findings on secondary movements are not specific to Nigerians, as nationality disaggregation was not possible due to the small sample size.

Onward movement intentions beyond Niger

For many, Niger is just one step on a longer journey



87% of all respondents had **not reached the end of their journey** after arriving in Niger

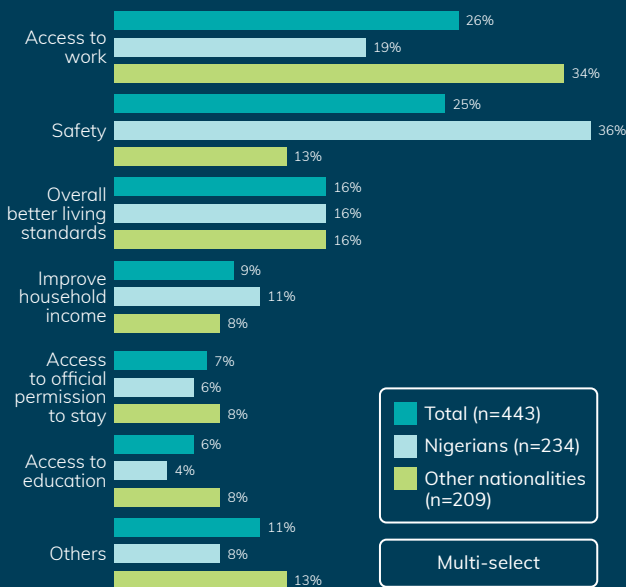
- Nearly half of respondents intending to move onward cited a **preferred destination in Europe (48%)**.
- Nigerians** more often named **Canada (15%)** and the **USA (10%)** as their preferred destinations, compared with 5% and 2% among other nationalities

Top countries of intended destination, among the 443 respondents who intended to move onward from Niger



Safety is the primary factor driving onward movement among Nigerians

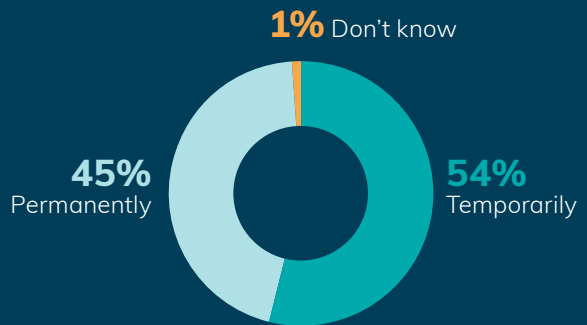
What is the most influential factor in deciding to continue your journey?



Among respondents planning to continue their journey, **Nigerians (n=234)** stated an intention to **seek asylum** at their destination more often than other nationalities (n=209), at **60% compared to 46%**

The preferred destination is not necessarily the end of the journey as half of respondents intend to stay there only temporarily

Do you intend to stay at your destination permanently or temporarily?



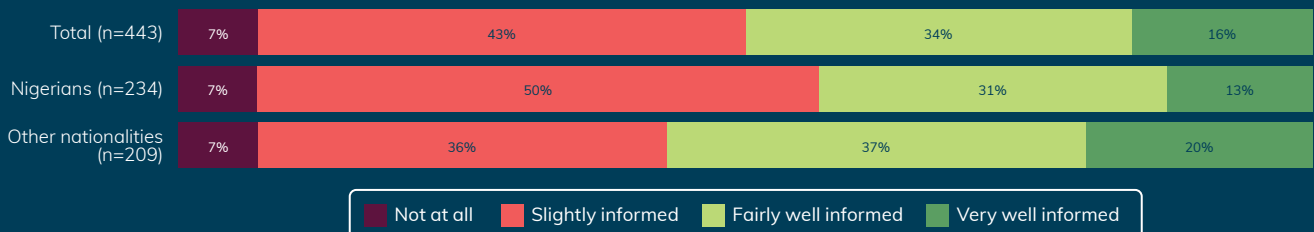
67% Nigerians plan to stay only temporarily at their destination, compared with 38% among other nationalities



13% of all Nigerians would consider **returning to their country of origin** only provided it would be **safe**

Nigerians are the most inadequately informed about the requirements for migration to their destination

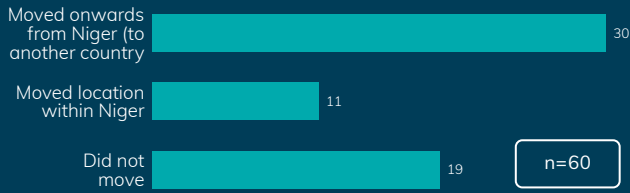
How informed are you about the rules and regulations about entering and living in your intended destination?



Tracking movements 6 months later³

Most respondents had moved northward after 6 months

After 6 months: mobility in Niger and onward movement abroad



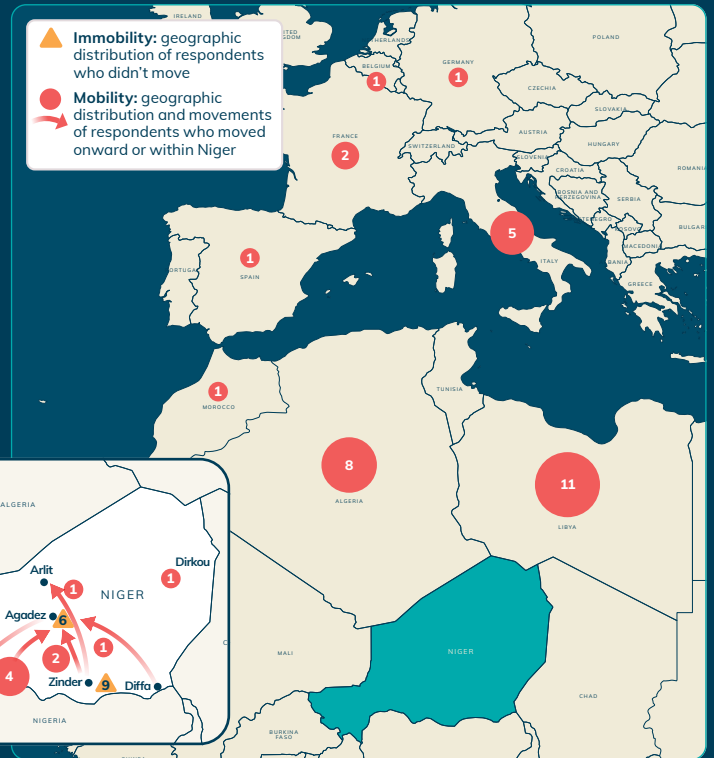
After 6 months: onward movement intentions



Almost two-thirds (39/60) of respondents had not yet reached their final destination, still planning to move onward, including among those who had already left Niger (18/30).

Respondents intending to continue their journey were mainly seeking better livelihoods: 28/39 aimed to access work, 23/39 sought to increase their household income, and 19/39 were looking for better living conditions.⁵

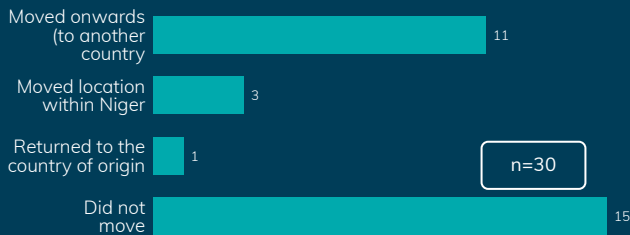
Mobility and immobility trends after 6 months (n=60)⁴



Tracking movements 12 months later

Intentions change over time, with immobility ultimately becoming the outcome for some

Between the 6- & 12-month periods: mobility in Niger & onward movement abroad



After 6 months: onward movement intentions



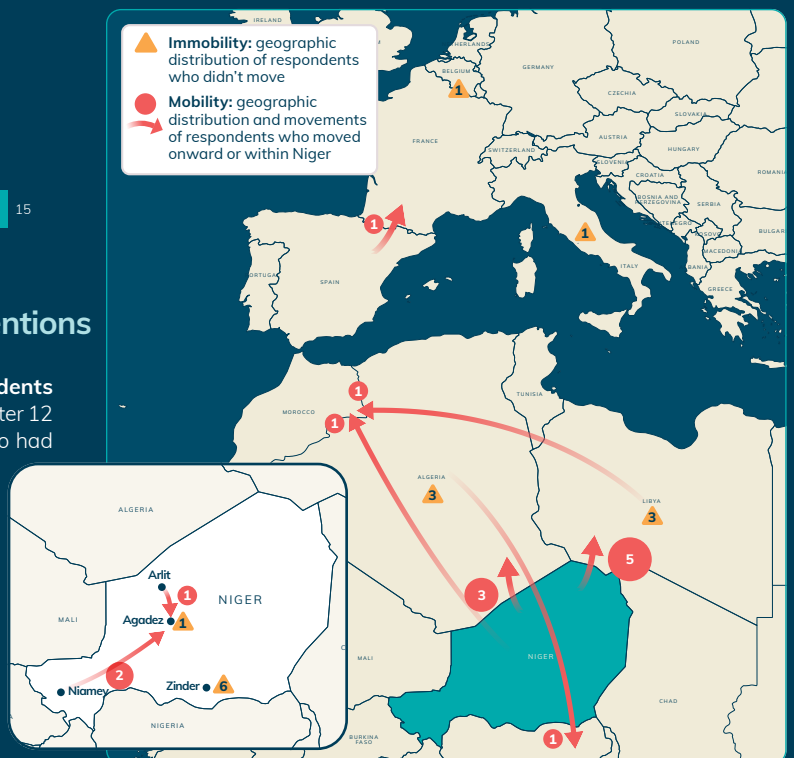
Two-thirds (20/30) of respondents still planned to move onward after 12 months, mostly among those who had already left Niger (17/20).

Five respondents had initially planned to move onward from Niger but ultimately decided to stay.

More than half (12/20) of those who still intended to move onward after 12 months had changed their planned destination over time.

15 respondents had not moved. 5/6 respondents who remained in Algeria and Libya still intended to move onward, highlighting potential barriers to movement.

Mobility and immobility trends between the 6- and 12-month periods (n=30)



³ The sample sizes for the longitudinal surveys were too small to allow for robust disaggregation by nationality.

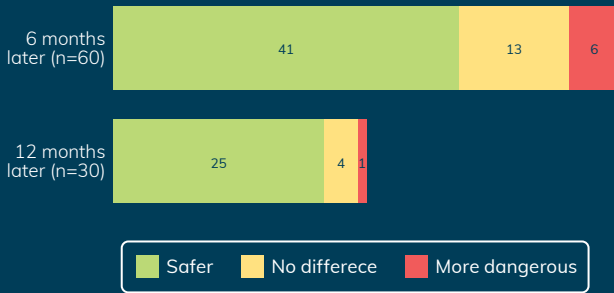
⁴ The respondent who arrived in Dirkou after 6 months had been first interviewed in Niamey.

⁵ Other reasons include access to healthcare (9/39), access to official permission to stay (8/39), access to education (7/39), better relations with local population (7/39), better relations with authorities (5/39), safety (5/39), better housing conditions (4/39), access to State income support (2/39).

Navigating risks over time

Perceptions of safety improve over time though incident reports remain high

Would you describe your situation since we last spoke as safer or more dangerous?



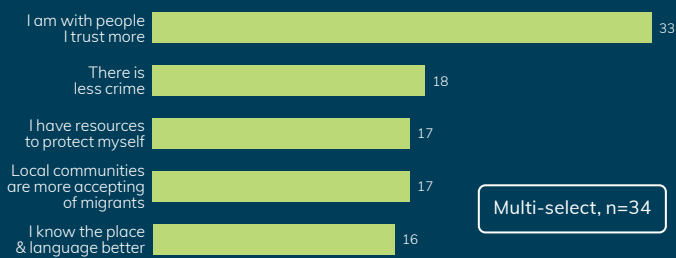
Perceptions of safety improved after 6 months...

- ...both among those who stayed in Niger (20/30) and those who moved onward (21/30)
- ...even among those who reported experiencing protection incidents in the same period (21/34)

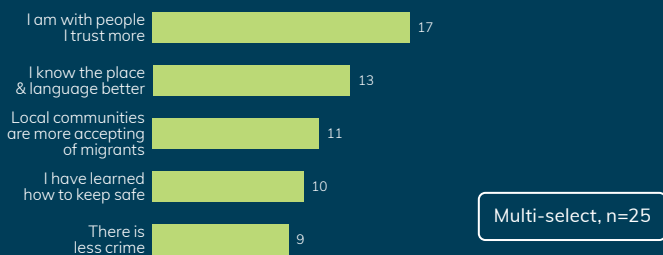
Moving north seems to carry greater risks than staying in Niger: reports of incidents were more frequent among respondents who moved onward from Niger (22/30) than among those who stayed (12/30)

Surveyed migrants feel safer over time because they are with trusted people, face less crime and have the capacity to protect themselves

Why do you feel it is safer? Top 5 answers⁷ After 6 months



Between the 6- and 12-month periods

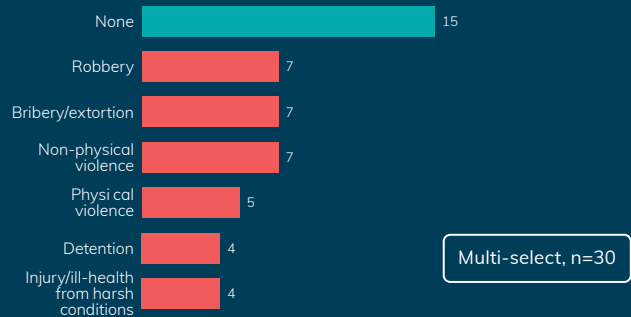


Have you personally experienced any of these types of incidents since our last interview?

Top 6 incidents⁶ After 6 months

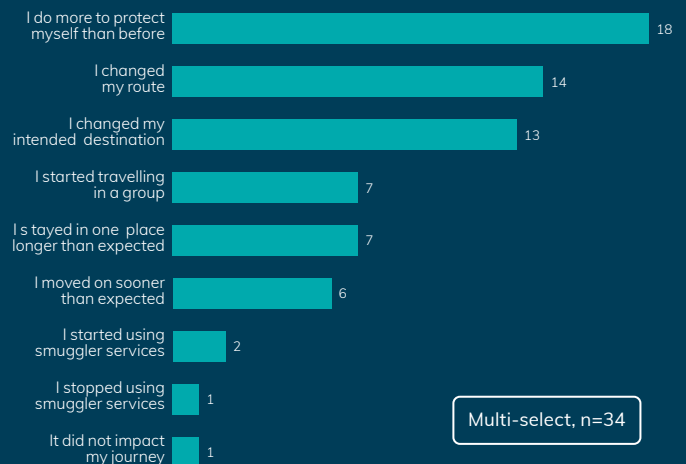


Between the 6- and 12-month periods



Respondents took greater protective measures and adjusted their decisions after experiencing incidents

How did experiencing this incident impact your journey? After 6 months



Most respondents who reported incidents after 6 or 12 months were able to **access assistance following the incident** (27/34 and 11/15 respectively)

⁶ Other reported incidents after 6 months included witnessing death (3), sexual violence (2) and kidnapping (1). Other reported incidents between the 6- and 12-month periods included witnessing death (3), kidnapping (3) and sexual violence (2).

⁷ Other responses after 6 months were learning how to keep safe (15), less violent conflict (13), and presence of security actors (10). Other responses between the 6- and 12-month periods were less violent conflict (7), presence of security actors (7), and resources to protect oneself (5).



4Mi data collection

4Mi is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migration and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move. 4Mi field enumerators are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in Asia and the Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa, and West Africa.

Note that the sampling approach means that the findings derived from the surveyed sample provide rich insights, but the figures cannot be used to make inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at: mixedmigration.org/what-is-4mi-migration-data

